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among its manifold and marvelous properties not only dynamic power, but attributes regenerative of vitality, and with these two it is capable, if the experiments of Dr. Griffiths are to be relied upon, of killing the bacillus tuberculosis in the living human body, in case the lesions of the disease have not seriously impaired electric conductivity in the parts morbidly invaded; and capable also of contributing to restore healthy function to them, and thence normal structure. It remains for physicians to make the essay here indicated at no expense or risk whatever. If the treatment prove to have any virtue in it, it would apply to other bacterial diseases besides tuberculosis.

In regard to the essay with reference to the sterilization of drinking-water, experiments could be made at no great labor and expense compared with the vast interests at stake in a large city. Through microscopic tests would soon be set at rest the question as to whether to any, and if to any, to what extent germs could, by the means described, be destroyed in city water, and scrutiny of the health of the city, within the lines especially of certain diseases, through comparison of present with past records, would in successive years have its own independent and conclusive tale to tell. I pledge Philadelphia prospectively in a bumper of pure water more worthy of celebration than the best Falernian wine.

Obituary Notice of P. W. Sheafer. By J. P. Lesley.

(Read before the American Philosophical Society, April 3, 1891.)

Peter Wenrich Sheafer was born at Wiconisco, in Dauphin county, Pa., March 31, 1819. His father, Henry Sheafer, was afterwards President of the Lykens Valley Railroad Company, and Superintendent of the Lykens Valley Coal Company, mining the finest quality of anthracite coal, at the west end of the Southern Anthracite Coal field. The discovery of the Lykens valley coal bed in the body of the Pottsville Conglomerate was one of the astonishing incidents of Pennsylvania geology, and enabled the Sheafers, father and son, to establish a great trade in anthracite coal upon the line of the Susquehanna river as far as Baltimore.

Peter Sheafer was engaged at various times in his long professional life in following the outcrop of this interconglomerate coal around the edges of the Southern and Middle fields, but without finding it in an equally good condition in any other parts of the region. He often expressed to me his hopes and his disappointments regarding it. It was but an episode in his career, for his large fortune was chiefly accumulated by the purchase and exploitation of the Mammoth and other large beds overlying the Conglomerate.

After leaving school, Peter took a full course at Oxford Academy, New York, with the object of a better geological acquaintance with coal and coal mining. But at that early date, the science of geology could hardly be said to exist. In 1835, the New Jersey and Virginia State surveys, and in 1836 the Pennsylvania survey, were begun. Prof. H. D. Rogers' first assistants were Mr. Booth, afterwards the chemist of the United States Mint, and Mr. Frazer, afterwards Professor of Chemistry in the University of Pennsylvania. The following year, Mr. Trego, Mr. McKinney, Dr. Whelpley, and others were appointed assistants on the survey. In 1838, Peter W. Sheafer received his commission, while Dr. Whelpley had charge of the Southern and Middle field, and Mr. McKinley of the Northern field. Henderson and I were the next year Whelpley's aids, and I saw little or nothing at that time of Peter Sheafer, who was busy with his own part of the field work, and was laying the foundation of that accurate knowledge of the order and quality of each coal bed which enabled him afterwards to make himself easily the principal practical mining engineer of the anthracite region. His mind and the training of it was just suited to this work of his life. He had good judgment, inexhaustible liking, and ability for work, a retentive memory, a quick eye for money values, a peaceable disposition, great caution in undertaking, and pertinacity in accomplishing the exploitation of properties. He made himself personally acquainted with everybody and everything that happened or was likely to happen in the anthracite world, and kept himself in constant intercourse with owners, investors, speculators, mining prospectors, engineers, and railroad companies; and, what was the key to his fortune, never rode hobbies, or allowed himself to be turned aside into other pursuits; although at various times in his life he traveled far to examine and report upon distant coal fields for those who employed him as a professional adviser. I have known, also, of his reports on iron-ore properties and oil and gas lands. He was also a great collector of statistics, and was the first to conceive the idea of a statistical coal pagoda, with lines drawn across it at regular intervals to represent successive years, the old legendary 365 tons of anthracite sent to market the first year forming the apex of the pagoda, and its successive stories, bulging or being overhung according as the anthracite market received a greater or less addition to its ever-swelling volume of trade. He was for many years the recognized authority for the statistics of the region.

In 1848, he married Miss Harriet Whitcomb, of New England, and set up his home and office in Pottsville, the capital of the anthracite country. For forty-three years this has been his happy, hospitable, and elegant residence, and here his children, Louise, Arthur, William, and Harry were born and educated, his sons becoming partners in his enterprises, sharing the toils, the responsibilities, and the wealth of their father, and fitted well to maintain the honor of his name.

In 1850 Peter Sheafer took an active and influential part in the effort inaugurated by William Parker Foulke of Philadelphia and other gentlemen to obtain an appropriation from the Legislature for publishing Prof. H. D. Rogers' Final Report on the Geology of the State. Half of the appropriation was to be spent in field work, to bring the Report up to date, especially that part of it which related to the anthracite coal fields. Mr. Rogers formed a corps, consisting of Peter Sheafer and his cousin, John Sheafer, for underground surveys ; myself for surface topography ; Edward Desor, of Neuchatel, for the study of the surface deposits, and Leo Lesquereux, of Columbus, O., for the study of the coal plants. This work only lasted one year, and this corps was disbanded, but a good deal of special work was done in the following year or two in other parts of the State ; and the Report did not appear until 1858.

At the organization of the Second Survey of the State, in 1874, Peter Sheafer's business interests were too exacting and important to permit of his taking an active personal hand in it, but he did all that he could to further the interests of the survey at Harrisburg and elsewhere through the following fifteen years of the continuance of the survey ; and I am happy to say that the intimate friendship which he and I formed in 1851 was confirmed and continued with unabated cordiality to the present time. His son Arthur was commissioned as Mr. Ashburner's assistant in the long and difficult survey of McKean, Elk, Cameron, and Forest counties, where he exhibited great abilities for field and office work inherited from his father; and the greatest part of the "Report on Elk County," with its illustrations, is from Arthur Sheafer's own pen.

Peter Sheafer was a genial and lovable man, a religious man, and, what always struck me as very interesting, a man of poetical temperament, and a reader of the poets. But he was never properly trained to express his thoughts in a style of elegant composition. His business writings were unexceptionable. His statements of business facts and contracts were satisfactory, but he was unused to a logical, consecutive, well-systematized and picturesque presentation of a subject. This is, of course, to be ascribed to his lack of youthful classical training. I have often thought of him as that one of my friends whose life career best illustrated the advantages and disadvantages of college discipline. For by not going to college he gained more than he lost, and enjoyed great worldly and social prosperity at the very small cost of missing literary facility. I even doubt that the lack of technical school training in his profession as civil and mining engineer was at any time an obstacle in his path of life. He learned enough to join his experienced father in earlier enterprises ; and in after ones his intercourse with business men and technical books and professional experts supplemented his own experiments and kept his intellectual ability abreast of the public needs of each succeeding year.

My friend Sheafer was a silent man, I should say reticent, always smiling and cheery in conversation, but seldom or never allowing even to his enthusiasm more than a momentary flash of expression. He had the confirmed habits of a good listener; and what he himself had to say was said in the fewest words the theme permitted or the occasion demanded. He was intently sympathetic, and loved to hear others talk ; his own contributions being chiefly made in the shape of facts. No man better appreciated those whom he loved or respected, and this he owed to his poetic temperament.

One of the best instances of his ingenuity is his successful device for gobbing up a mine by boring down to its heading from the surface and causing a stream of water to carry down the bore-hole the fine slack or braize coal from a neighboring dust-hill. The coal-mud thus introduced into the abandoned workings is banked back behind loose brattices which let the water flow through but retain the mud, which in some months becomes solid and firm enough to hold up the roof; and then the workings are reopened and the mine is robbed of its pillars. The coal usually lost by the crushing of the pillars is thus saved without danger to the miners ; and the country is also saved from caving and settling; which entails a further profit, inasmuch as the coal beds above the one worked out are preserved intact for future mining. Schuylkill county ought to erect a statue to Peter W. Sheafer for this invention alone.

He became a member of the American Philosophical Society, July 17, 1863. He was a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, of the American Institute of Mining Engineers, and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. His philanthropic feelings induced him to become a member of the American Colonization Society.

His death took place at Brown's Mills, Burlington, N. J., to which he had been taken from Atlantic City in the hope of saving his life, and he was buried at Pottsville, March 31, 1891.

He was six months my senior in age; and now I remain the last one of that old set of the first geological survey of our State. They are all gone—H. D. Rogers, Booth, Frazer, McKinney, Trego, Holl, Boyé, R. E. Rogers, Haldeman, Whelpley, Hodge, Jackson, Henderson, McKinley, Sheafer—not one lives to tell the adventures of those early days of our science, when the very foundation principles of it had to be laid, and the physical constitution of Pennsylvania had to be discovered, without experience and without instruction. The bare outlines of the story have been told ; but the individual life of that story will never be told ; is, in fact, untellable.